

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 01933 131354Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 AGRE-00 AID-05
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00
USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04
SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-07 CEA-01 DOE-11
SOE-02 DODE-00 PA-01 AF-10 L-03 H-01 /127 W
-----089530 131926Z /46

R 131230Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1373
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL DHARHAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CONFIDENTIAL JIDDA 1933

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION JIDDA FROM USLO RIYADH 13 MAR 78
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:

QUOTE

RIYADH 185

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 JIDDA 01933 131354Z

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, SA, BTIO
SUBJECT: ARAB BOYCOTT CONFERENCE

1. IN MARCH 11 CONVERSATION WITH USLO OFFICER, BADULLA AHRAR KHOJA, DIRECTOR OF SAUDI BOYCOTT OFFICE, SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THE ARAB BOYCOTT LEAGUE WOULD MEET WITHIN TWENTY OR THIRTY

DAYS, EITHER IN SANA OR CAIRO. HE SHOWED USLO OFFICER A JOINT STATEMENT SIGNED BY KHOJA AND MOHAMMAD AHMAD MAHJOUR, HEAD OF CENTRAL BOYCOTT OFFICE, SIGNED IN CAIRO ONE WEEK EARLIER. THE STATEMENT (1) NOTED THAT POLITICAL DIFFERENCES OVER VENUE HAD DELAYED CONVENING OF THE CONFERENCE, (2) STATED THAT FAILURE TO HAVE REGULAR MEETINGS THREATENED THE SOLIDARITY OF THE LEAGUE, AND (3) CALLED FOR A CONFERENCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. KHOJA SAID SANA WAS DESIGNATED BECAUSE OF ITS NEUTRALITY IN THE DISPUTE OVER THE SADAT INITIATIVE. CAIRO REMAINED THE ALTERNATIVE SITE SHOULD THE YAR DECLINE TO PLAY HOST. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD APPROACH THE YAR ON BEHALF OF THE CBO. KHOJA SAID IT REQUIRED A FACE-TO-FACE MEETING TO GET MAHJOUR TO AGREE TO CALLING THE CONFERENCE, SINCE HE FEARS A PUBLIC SHOWDOWN WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT. BOTH MEMBERS WILL DEFINITELY VOTE AGAINST MAHJOUR WHEN HIS TERM EXPIRES NEXT AUGUST AND HE KNEW IT. HE WAS BECOMING MORE DEFENSIVE AND WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE AFTERMATH OF THE SADAT VISIT TO MOBILIZE SUPPORT AGAINST SAUDI-EGYPTIAN EFFORTS TO REMOVE U.S. FIRMS FROM THE BLACKLIST.

3. WHILE SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE BOUND TO BOYCOTT LEAGUE DECISIONS, KHOJA SAID THAT MANY UNANIMOUS VOTES IN THE PAST WERE DECEPTIVE. REPRESENTATIVES GENERALLY CHANGED THEIR VOTES AFTER THE INITIAL ROUND OF VOTING TO CONFORM TO THE MAJORITY. KHOJA SAID THAT HE WOULD PROPOSE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 JIDDA 01933 131354Z

THAT ALL VOTES BE RECORDED AS ORIGINALLY CAST TO MAKE REPRESENTATIVES MORE ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS.

4. KHOJA REFERRED TO SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRINCE FAHD TO "MAKE THINGS EASY FOR U.S. FIRMS". HE SAID THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT FORD, COCA-COLA, AND RCA AT THE BOYCOTT CONFERENCE, BUT WAS CONCERNED THAT THE LEGAL INABILITY OF THESE FIRMS TO ANSWER CBO INQUIRIES WOULD STRENGTHEN MAHJOUR'S HAND. AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT - KHOJA DISCLOSED THAT HE HAD VOTED AGAINST GCI AND BRITISH LEYLAND APPLICATIONS FOR REMOVAL FROM THE BLACKLIST. THEY HAD MADE ALL THE REQUISITE DENIALS OF HAVING ISRAELI CONNECTIONS BUT KHOJA SIMPLY DID NOT BELIEVE THEM. CAMPBELL UNQUOTE.

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